



# The Flaming Chalice

THEOLOGICALLY DIVERSE • RADICALLY INCLUSIVE • JUSTICE CENTERED

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church | April 2023 Newsletter



## Interim Minister

Rev. Ruth Rinehart  
(720)290-5715

[minister@starrking.org](mailto:minister@starrking.org)

## Board President

Roy Dickerson

[president@starrking.org](mailto:president@starrking.org)

## Office Administrator

Maya Alexander

[office@starrking.org](mailto:office@starrking.org)

## Newsletter

Kelly and Nathan Heigert

[newsletter@starrking.org](mailto:newsletter@starrking.org)

22577 Bayview Avenue

Hayward, CA 94541

(510) 581-2060

[starrking.org](http://starrking.org)

[facebook.com/StarrKingChurch](https://facebook.com/StarrKingChurch)

[instagram.com/starrkinguuc](https://instagram.com/starrkinguuc)

## APRIL 2

### Intergen: Passover Seder Service

Join us for a Unitarian Universalist Passover Seder as our Sunday morning worship. This will be an intergenerational service celebrating the need of all people to move towards freedom. Children are an integral part of this ceremony and families will sit together at the table. We will serve matzoh ball soup as our mini-meal. Come experience this beloved Starr King tradition.

*Allison Prout and Rev Ruth Rinehart lead.*

## APRIL 9

### Easter: Rising in Community

Easter is theologically complicated for Unitarian Universalists. Join us in community and worship on this sacred day.

*Reverend Ruth Rinehart leads.*

## APRIL 16

### Resistance is Futile?

How do we deal with resistance to assimilation? There are many different answers. Join pulpit guest Glen Jacob, as we explore some examples from science fiction and fantasy as metaphors to examine this issue. From the Borg from *Star Trek*, to *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. Come for an unusual and fun service.

*Glen Jacob leads.*

## APRIL 23

### Earth Day

Respect life. Restore earth. Renew Spirit. Unitarian Universalists are committed to environmental justice. Join the congregation after the service for a celebration of Earth Day, with booths, child-friendly activities, and lots of love!

*Reverend Ruth Rinehart leads.*

## APRIL 30

TBD

## WHAT'S INSIDE

**3** Announcements/  
Congregational  
Conversations

**7** Stewardship

**9** SoUUiful Family  
Ministries

**11** Ongoing Activities  
and Birthdays

# March Highlights



# Announcements

## Congregational Conversations & Cottage Meetings

Hello lovelies. On we go, after a beautiful Season of Stewardship, into more Cottage Meetings and Congregational Conversations, doing the work of this interim time for you.

**April cottage meetings** are just around the corner. The question for April is: **Does Starr King want a Fellowshiped UU Minister after the interim time?** This is actually a complex question, and it certainly will NOT be definitely decided by the end of our Congregational Conversation on Sunday, April 16th. This is interim work for you, beloveds. To think through substantive questions, in community, in conversation with each other. April is the beginning of this conversation, which will continue in different forms over the coming year. Part of your interim work is looking deeply at who you are as a congregation, what the word “community” means to you (the highest value that emerged from January cottage meetings).



This month, we will focus particularly on the anti-racism, anti-oppression and multicultural awareness work that all citizens are called to engage with. How do we become multiculturally competent, in order to engage in productive conflict within the community. Anti-racism work is all about asking questions, staying grounded in love, looking within, recognizing that we have all been born into a system – the dominant culture – that perpetuates sexism, racism, and ableism with a “power over” orientation, rather than a “power with” orientation.

No one has a guidebook on how to be ultimately successful in this work of [dismantling the white supremacy culture](#) in which we all swim. We are called by our UU principles to “free and responsible search for meaning” in our communities. I believe we are called to recognize love as the grounding guiding principle – not a sweet and sugary and saccharine love, but a love that burns with the fire of commitment. Commitment to that more just and beautiful world we all know is possible.

This month, the sign-ups for the Cottage Meetings will be low-tech. The four facilitators will be carrying a clipboard with them on Sunday, and below you will find their contact information, to let them know if you are signing up for their meeting. A maximum of eight (other than the facilitator(s)) will be managed, to keep these meeting small and relational. Then, we will all gather for the larger Congregational Conversation on Sunday, April 16th.

# Announcements

## Congregational Conversations & Cottage Meetings (cont.)

Please reach out to these lovely facilitators for the April Cottage Meetings, and bring your whole self, and all your questions (many of which might be able to be answered right away, but will be part of the ongoing conversation):

- Monday, April 10th, 5:30pm, at church (snacks provided). Liz Nelson, [elizabethnelsonrec@yahoo.com](mailto:elizabethnelsonrec@yahoo.com), 510.566.4770
- Tuesday, April 11th, 6:30pm, at the church. Darryl Ray: [dalbertray@yahoo.com](mailto:dalbertray@yahoo.com), 510.612.8358
- Thursday, April 13th, 1:30pm, at the church. Marilyn Mosher: [mmosher@earthlink.net](mailto:mmosher@earthlink.net), 510.909.9182
- Saturday, April 15th, 10:30am, on zoom. Amy Pete: [amypetebreathes@gmail.com](mailto:amypetebreathes@gmail.com), 917.531.4535

This question, **Does Starr King want a Fellowshiped UU Minister after the interim time?** Here is the text we will be considering, which is standard language in UU contracts for Interim Ministers:

*1.5 Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression and Multicultural Awareness:*

*The Board and the Minister commit to addressing the systemic prejudices and biases found within all parts of society. This work includes ensuring that the Minister(s), staff, and members are trained to understand, welcome, and better serve an increasingly diverse community.*

*The Board and Interim Minister will continually address the ways that systems of oppression within and beyond our Congregation are perpetuated and agree to collaborate on a joint process of reflection to ensure progress. This includes, but is not limited to, the ways in which the characteristics of dominant cultures live in our practices, systems, procedures, and lives.*

This does not lend itself to a simple yes or no answer at this point. There are many options, many implications of the choices you will make, as you call your next minister. These April cottage meetings and Congregational Conversation around this question is a conversation, part of your work during this interim time. I encourage you to directly contact one of the four facilitators and sign up for one of the Cottage Meetings. As in January and February, I know you will experience community, as you wrestle with substantive questions of our time.

Blessings,

–Rev Ruth

# Announcements

## ICJJ holds Annual Retreat at Starr King

On February 25th leaders in the Interfaith Coalition for Justice in our Jails (ICJJ) held our annual retreat at Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church. We met to plan initiatives for the remainder of 2023. The feeling in the room was that it was time well spent. We had the opportunity to get grounded in the criminal legal system and the jail we are trying to impact, identified some new opportunities for change, and created four groups which will meet soon to flesh out initiatives for this year.

Twenty-six people attended the retreat, including – happily – almost one-third of the folks new to ICJJ. Because the system surrounding Santa Rita Jail is so complex, we set up a buddy system so that the “oldies” could integrate the “newbies” more easily into the group.

Faith congregations and organizations represented included: Faith in Action East Bay, Starr King UU Church, Kehilla Community Synagogue, Montclair Presbyterian Church, Skyline Community Church – United Church of Christ, Plymouth United Church of Christ, First Unitarian Church of Oakland, Imani Community Church, Interfaith Council of Alameda County, St. Columba Catholic Church, Lighthouse Mosque - Oakland, Lakeshore Ave Baptist Church, Temple Sinai – Oakland, Urban Strategies Council, Full Acts Gospel Church – Oakland, and the Berkeley Friends Meeting (Quaker)

Our Intended Outcomes for the retreat were:

- We are grounded in our vision, mission and what makes ICJJ unique
- We have increased our understanding of and insight into the systems we are trying to impact
- We have generated and fleshed out 3 to 5 initiatives for 2023
- We understand the gap between our aspirations and our current capacity and have generated ideas on how to address the gap

After getting grounded in who we are and the problems we are trying to address, we broke into four groups to dive deep into these areas of the system and to brainstorm solutions (or possible ICJJ “initiatives”):

1. District Attorney and Public Defender
2. Santa Rita jail
3. Behavioral/Mental Health and the Justice System
4. Re-entry



# Announcements

## ICJJ holds Annual Retreat at Starr King (cont.)

The groups came up with 12 different initiatives. We then took the temperature of the group to see which initiatives were a good fit for ICJJ and where the personal passion was, and there was support for nearly all of the initiatives! Rather than artificially limit our options at this early stage, we decided to have people sign up to participate in initial group meetings to clarify the initiatives and prepare proposals which would be presented at our March meeting.

Group	Description
<b>Stop Deaths in Our Jail</b>	A public campaign to raise awareness and put pressure on elected officials
<b>DA, etc</b>	Prosecution and Court Processes that – among other outcomes – would help limit size of the jail population
<b>Jail Conditions</b>	A wide range of possibilities, from continued concern about Covid transmission to program and other re-entry preparation.
<b>Care First (CFCC)</b>	Involvement in the CF Community Coalition, to win adequate budget for community-based behavioral health services
<b>ICJJ Functions</b>	How do we build systems and capacity to keep the organization functioning well?

The groups include four focused on impacting the system and an additional one on ICJJ functional areas such as outreach and communication: The planning committee worked closely with ICJJ member Susan Burns to design the retreat. We are so grateful to Susan for her facilitation and other skills!

Thanks also to Jean Moses who assisted Susan and Jo Bauen who led our opening and closing circles; to Payton Silket, Faith in Action East Bay's liaison to ICJJ, who opened our session with a powerful Faith in Action moment and opening prayer; to Bob Britton, his wife Terri, and logistics team members Betsy King and Nancy Taylor for facilities arrangements and meals; and to Rev Ruth Rinehart and Starr King President, Roy Dickerson who offered Starr King church for our event.

–Bob Britton

# Year Round Stewardship

You know how we observe Black History Month, Women's History Month, and so forth, and at the same time really every month needs to be Black History Month, and every month needs to be Women's History Month? Well, we just finished our Stewardship Season, and guess what: It's not over. Every season is Stewardship Season.

We marked this past month as a sacred time in our Unitarian Universalist calendar, a time when we formally renew our commitment to our beloved church community, past, present, and future, by renewing our financial commitments. Without these financial commitments we wouldn't have a church. *At the same time, stewardship is so much more than money. Stewardship is about helping with worship, or RE, or hospitality, or governance. It's about washing dishes and pulling weeds. It's about connecting, and growing together. It's about engaging in the rich, messy, difficult, satisfying work of being in community together. It's about practical things that are also holy, and that bless us all.*

The stewardship team is asking everyone in the church to find a way to be of service to the church community at least once a quarter – to the extent that your life circumstances allow. It could be as simple as bringing flowers one Sunday for worship or washing up after coffee hour. Many of you are already doing way more than that, and we thank you! There are signup sheets on the nametag rack for greeting and flowers. We'll work on making other opportunities available.

Many thanks to everyone who filled out the back of the pledge card on Commitment Sunday. If you missed your chance, there are more pledge cards in the foyer! Put your name on the front, fill out the back, and drop it in the offertory basket. If that's not convenient (Zoomies, especially – this is for you) here's what it looks like:

Please check one or more boxes if you would like more information or to indicate that you would like to be involved:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Church Leadership  | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality and Membership   | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Exploration (children & youth)                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Social activities         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peace and Justice Action Team  | <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Religious Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-racism, anti-oppression, multiculturalism                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Small Group Ministry      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications (newsletter, website, social media, publicity, or outreach) |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other  |  |
- 

Feel free to drop me a line ([ben@betho.us](mailto:ben@betho.us)) with your interests -- what you're already doing or what you're interested in. We're collating the responses and will communicate about opportunities.

# Year Round Stewardship

(cont.)

[Here is my final report from this past Stewardship Season](#), in case you missed it in the Announcements email:

We wrapped up our Stewardship Season on March 26 with a beautiful service and a fabulous potluck lunch. Many thanks to everyone who contributed to our stewardship efforts this spring! I want to especially thank:

- Rev Ruth, for her warm and inspiring leadership, and especially for believing the impossible – that visiting everyone was vital and that it was something we could do.
- The Stewardship Leads and Visiting Stewards team– Roy, Mileva, Terri, Keith, Rev Ruth, Mary Lou, Claudia, and Rene
- The fabulous testimonial givers– Terri, Roy, Stephanie, Lorie, Joanna, and Keith
- Everyone who contributed to the potluck! Setting up tables, decorating them, organizing everything, bringing food, cleaning up – and especially Mileva, the chief organizer.
- And everyone who welcomed a visiting steward into your home or met with them some other way!

The pledge total was not what we'd hoped. It's \$154,580 at the moment, well short of what we'll need for next year's budget. It might go up a few thousand more, but that's pretty much it for now. But that's only part of the picture. Financially we're blessed with substantial savings, and the plan is to use some of our savings for this rebuilding time, planning for a robust future in which the church thrives and grows. The finance committee is working on next year's budget, and they'll be in touch about that before the annual meeting in May.

Of the 58 pledges we have, 10 are the same as last year and 39 went up. This means 84% of us at least maintained our pledges, and 2/3 of us actually increased them. This is a powerful vote of confidence in the church and the future of the church. We also strengthened our connections with each other with all the stewardship conversations. Thank you all for receiving us so warmly and sharing your time, your thoughts, your feelings so generously. And your money too!

To me, all these intangibles combine to make this year's Stewardship Season a great success.

*–Ben Ogilvie, Stewardship Chair*



# SoUllful Family Ministry

## March Highlights

### Sharing Thoughts....

The following bits of dialogue were fleeting moments embedded in conversations among five seven-year-old youngsters. Our UU principles do exist in our youth, just re-worded a little bit:

“There use to be boy’s and girl’s colors, but now it is okay for a boy to like pink and a girl to like blue.”

“Mistakes are good, because you learn from them.”

“Some people are mean to people with brown skin.”

The children had the opportunity to draw a self portrait on a mirror. Ramona finished hers and shared, “I put Earth where my head should be.”

### Circle Time

Our children explored this month’s theme, “vulnerability”. We discussed how when we do make mistakes it’s a *good thing*. We can learn from them. Accepting the imperfections in ourselves and in others is loving who we are. Understanding what our heart feels and needs is a level of vulnerability that we all experience, young and old.

### Announcements

**April 9: Easter Can Hunt.** The children will hunt for canned goods this year and donate to South Parish Food bank. In return, they will receive an Easter Egg treat. A Easter/Spring celebration will be happening in the classroom with lots of Easter/Spring celebration activities.

**April 23: Earth Day’s Project.** For Earth Day the children will involve themselves in restoring our community garden, pulling weeds, refreshing our garden soil and planting seeds. All are welcomed!

**Date TBD: A work oops...I mean a *Fun day*:** Our cottage and classroom are in need of some reorganizing. A simple lunch will be provided. Look for the up-and-coming announcement (when all the rain has passed). Please consider joining us. Thank you.

**April 18 at 4:00pm:** Family Ministry Council meeting.



# SoUllful Family Ministry

## March Highlights (cont.)

### Gratitude

This blessing extends past our wonderful classroom volunteers Lea C, Mary Lou S, Laurie M, Diane M, Terry B, Corina, Nayela and Mireya. Family Ministry is taking on a life of its own. Parents are organizing monthly events along with supporting one another and Family Ministry Council is hard at work reestablishing itself.

*–Lorie Miller, Volunteer*



# Ongoing Activities

COVID restrictions have been lifted

- Masks are optional.
- Eating & drinking are permitted in the Fellowship Hall
- Singing without masks is permitted
- Encourage gathering in all indoor and outdoor settings.

We will continue to provide:

- Virtual worship as an option as well as for meetings
- KN95 mask for your use

---

<b>Evening Meditation</b>	Every Wednesday 7:00-8:30 pm, on Zoom. Open to all. Visitors welcome. Contact: Diane Meyerson
<b>Board Meeting</b>	First Tuesday of the month, 3:30–5:00 pm on Zoom. Open to all. Contact: Roy Dickerson
<b>Peace and Justice Action Team</b>	Second Sunday of the month after worship (after a 15-20 minute break) in a hybrid model via Zoom using the same link as the service.
<b>Starr King Singers</b>	Sundays before the service from 9:30-10:00 a.m.
<b>Starr King Choir</b>	Every Monday 7:00-8:00 pm. Contact: Linli Wang at <a href="mailto:music@starrking.org">music@starrking.org</a>
<b>Adult RE</b>	(On hold) Contact: Mileva Saulo Lewis at <a href="mailto:milevalewis@comcast.net">milevalewis@comcast.net</a>
<b>Small Group Ministry</b>	Contact <a href="mailto:minister@starrking.org">minister@starrking.org</a> for more information.

---

We would love to celebrate your Birthday in The Chalice. If your special day is not already listed, please let us know the day and month of your Birthday. Send information to [ddmeyerson@gmail.com](mailto:ddmeyerson@gmail.com).



## April Birthdays

**April 3**  
Michael Noel

**April 11**  
Frank Satterwhite

**April 23**  
Henry Wagner

**April 10**  
Karen Carrell

**April 14**  
Georgia Gruver

**April 30**  
Bill Schuler